

PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT[661]

Notice of Intended Action

Twenty-five interested persons, a governmental subdivision, an agency or association of 25 or more persons may demand an oral presentation hereon as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.4(1)“b.”

Notice is also given to the public that the Administrative Rules Review Committee may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this proposed action under section 17A.8(6) at a regular or special meeting where the public or interested persons may be heard.

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code section 103.6, the Electrical Examining Board hereby gives Notice of Intended Action to amend Chapter 505, “Electrician and Electrical Contractor Licensing Program—Education,” Iowa Administrative Code.

The Electrical Examining Board is authorized to adopt administrative rules governing all aspects of the licensing of electricians and electrical contractors and of the state electrical inspection program. The proposed amendments update rules regarding postsecondary education requirements to clarify requirements for qualification for a journeyman license and to set requirements for qualification for a residential electrician license.

The postsecondary education program established by the Electrical Examining Board is designed to provide quality educational opportunities and on-the-job experience for persons with an interest in and an aptitude for electrical work. The structure of the Iowa statute allows the Electrical Examining Board to provide three alternative methods to qualify for licensing: (1) a certified apprenticeship program; (2) documented on-the-job training; and (3) postsecondary educational programs. These alternatives accommodate the needs of a variety of persons. Certified apprenticeship programs are not always available to every interested person in Iowa, and for some individuals, a community college-based educational program is the most accessible and affordable alternative. The Board has worked with Iowa community colleges to develop successful programs that combine academic and practical training for persons who seek journeyman electrician training. The community colleges now have the capacity to provide similar programs for residential electricians.

Having these community college-based programs for both journeyman and residential electrician training helps to keep Iowa competitive with other states offering similar programs and facilitates opportunities for stable, well-paid jobs for properly trained electricians. Proper electrical wiring is essential to public safety as well as resource efficiency. Advances in technology generally mean that new and existing homes and businesses require more electrical wiring. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated a 23 percent growth rate for electricians between 2010 and 2020, faster than the national average for all occupations.

In addition, a strong economy that results in increased construction means an increased demand for electricians. United States Census data show that Iowa suffered less and has recovered faster than its neighboring states during the latest recessionary period. Similarly, Associated General Contractor data also show that Iowa’s economic recovery has occurred faster than the national average. In fact, construction employment in Iowa rose 7 percent from 2008 to 2012, in comparison to the national average of just 1.3 percent, and Iowa ranked fourth out of 51 jurisdictions in construction employment numbers. Given Iowa’s economic edge in recovering from the recessionary period from 2008 to 2010, it is not surprising to see that measures of both residential and nonresidential construction are stronger in Iowa in comparison to its neighbors. This increases the demand for qualified electrical contractors and electricians from Iowa and from other states.

Finally, the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Wage Survey shows that Iowa electricians have an average annual income of \$46,980, which is higher than the average for all occupations. National statistics provide similar conclusions about electricians across the United States. Proper educational preparation for electricians’ jobs facilitates employment in jobs that pay well and help to improve public safety.

A public hearing on these proposed amendments will be held on January 17, 2013, at 10 a.m. in the First Floor Public Conference Room (Room 125), State Public Safety Headquarters Building, 215 East 7th Street, Des Moines, Iowa. Persons may present their views orally or in writing at the public hearing.

Any written comments or information regarding these proposed amendments may be directed to the Agency Rules Administrator by mail to Agency Rules Administrator, Iowa Department of Public Safety, State Public Safety Headquarters Building, 215 East 7th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319; by fax to (515)725-6195, Attention: Agency Rules Administrator; or by electronic mail to admrule@dps.state.ia.us by 4:30 p.m. on January 16, 2013.

Rules of the Electrical Examining Board are subject to the waiver provisions of rule 661—501.5(103). The Board does not have authority to waive requirements established by statute.

After analysis and review of this rule making, there should be a positive impact on jobs. This rule making lessens the burden for electricians to enter into Iowa's market by simplifying the examination process. Further, this rule making should allow Iowans to obtain business in other markets. The Board will continue to work with stakeholders to maximize this rule making's positive impact on jobs.

These amendments are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 103.12 and 103.12A.

The following amendments are proposed.

ITEM 1. Amend rule 661—505.101(103) as follows:

661—505.101(103) Program approval.

505.101(1) ~~Any~~ Pursuant to Iowa Code sections 103.12 and 103.12A, an educational institution that plans to offer a postsecondary electrical education program to prepare students to be licensed by the board shall seek approval for the program before students participate in the program. Separate approval is required for a journeyman electrician program and for a residential electrician program.

505.101(2) ~~The educational institution shall submit an application to the board office on a form specified by the board. Only applications from institutions which are~~ An educational institution that submits an application must provide certification that the institution is currently accredited by a recognized regional or national educational accrediting organizations shall be approved organization.

505.101(2) ~~For any postsecondary electrical education program for which approval is sought on or after September 1, 2011, approval by the board shall be obtained prior to student participation in the postsecondary electrical education program.~~

505.101(3) ~~An educational institution seeking initial approval of a journeyman electrician program or a residential electrician program must submit an application for initial approval of a postsecondary electrical education program shall be submitted to the board not less than 120 at least 60 days prior to student participation in the program.~~

505.101(4) ~~Approval of a postsecondary electrical education program is normally for five years, although approval may be withdrawn for cause prior to the expiration of the five-year period. The board shall set times for periodic review of approved programs and shall develop policies that address the following:~~

- ~~a. Requirements for the submission of applications.~~
- ~~b. Standards required for program approval.~~
- ~~c. Standards for withdrawal of approval or discontinuation of an approved program.~~
- ~~d. Standards for educational content and class attendance, qualifications for instructors, documentation and reporting required to establish compliance with program requirements, and specification of degrees or diplomas awarded.~~

505.101(5) ~~Applications for renewal of approval of postsecondary electrical education programs shall be submitted to the board at least 120 days prior to the expiration of the five-year approval period.~~

505.101(6) 505.101(5) Information regarding approved postsecondary electrical education programs may be obtained by contacting the board office. A list of approved postsecondary electrical education programs and other information about postsecondary education programs shall be posted on the board's Web site.

ITEM 2. Amend rule 661—505.102(103) as follows:

661—505.102(103) Standards for postsecondary electrical education programs. ~~A postsecondary electrical education program shall not be approved unless it meets all of the following requirements: Policies developed by the board shall meet the following minimum standards:~~

505.102(1) ~~The A~~ postsecondary educational program shall include coverage of subject matter areas listed in the document “Required Subjects for Postsecondary Electrical Education Programs,” approved and published by the board and available on request from the board office and from the board Web site. ~~Included in addition to~~ Every approved postsecondary educational program must include the technical electrical subjects shall be set out in the policy, which must include at least 4 hours of instruction on the Iowa electrical statute, Iowa Code chapter 103, with a minimum of 1 hour on Iowa electrical licensing requirements.

505.102(2) ~~Completion of the course of study shall require a minimum of 2,000 contact hours between the student and instructors, of which a minimum of 1,600 hours shall cover technical electrical subjects. Between 30 and 40 percent of the 2,000 hours shall be lecture hours, and the balance shall be laboratory or shop hours. Approved postsecondary educational programs must include a minimum number of contact hours, as specified in the policy adopted by the board. Each approved program must establish attendance policies that are specified in the policy adopted by the board. Each approved program must include 30 to 40 percent of contact hours that involve lecture, and the remaining hours must be laboratory or shop hours. In addition to the contact hours, each student must complete the specified number of hours of on-the-job training before the student is permitted to take the licensing examination.~~

505.102(3) ~~The program shall have an attendance policy which requires that a student attend at least 95 percent of each required program course to receive credit for the course. A postsecondary educational program for a journeyman electrician license shall include at least 2000 hours of instruction, and students must complete at least 6000 hours of on-the-job training before they become eligible to take a journeyman electrician examination. A postsecondary educational program for a residential electrician license shall include at least 1000 hours of instruction, and students must complete at least 4000 hours of on-the-job training before they become eligible to take a residential electrician examination.~~

505.102(4) ~~Each instructor shall possess one of the following qualifications: The board shall establish in its policy the minimum qualifications for instructors in a postsecondary educational program, which shall include:~~

a. ~~Hold a current license as a class A master electrician or class A journeyman electrician issued by the board; or Current licensing as an electrician, as set out in the board’s policy; and~~

b. ~~Hold a bachelor of science degree or equivalent or higher degree in electrical engineering and have completed 4,000 hours of experience performing electrical work; or Compliance with standards set by the Iowa department of education for an instructor at a community college.~~

c. ~~Hold an associate of applied science or equivalent or higher degree in electrical construction or maintenance or both and have completed 8,000 hours of experience performing electrical work.~~

505.102(5) ~~For each course limited to a specialized technical or general education area, the instructor shall possess evidence of related specialized technical knowledge, including completion of training, certification, or accreditation in the specialized subject matter.~~